

# Alachua hospital flap continues

By LARRY M. NICHOLS  
Times-Union Bureau Chief

GAINESVILLE — Alachua General Hospital officials took another slap Saturday at North Florida Regional Hospital's proposed expansion, claiming the private hospital's owners have done "a disservice to the community" by blaming Alachua General for not cooperating with them.

"I am concerned because of the way physicians and patients, as well as our other citizens, have been misled," Harry Edwards, Alachua General board chairman, said.

The Hospital Corporation of American (HCA) "made a mistake in saying they were going to expand without getting the proper authorization. We told them that at the very beginning. Now (they are) trying to blame their failure on Alachua General," Edwards said.

The two hospitals, one private and the other non-profit, have been at odds for almost two

years since North Florida announced plans to add another 150 beds to its West Gainesville facility.

A series of court suits, as yet unsettled, were filed by Alachua General and others attempting to halt the construction.

The key is a state law requiring hospital expansions to be approved by a regional health planning council. North Florida says it doesn't need the expansion approved since it was planned before the regional agency was empowered to approve plans.

On Nov. 15, Dr. Thomas Bartley, a member of the North Florida board of directors, appeared before the Alachua General board questioning why Alachua was involved in the court action.

"We don't think that a community with 200 excess beds needs another 150," Edwards said in a statement Saturday.

"HCA does, despite what those extra beds will do to raise health care costs," Edwards said.

Edwards said Paul McKnight, North Florida administrator, "wrote a letter saying North Florida and HCA were not interested. They felt the (regional) health planning council should be the coordinator — but now they want to by-pass the health planning council."

Edwards said health care costs "are a community responsibility and we are dedicated to keeping costs down."

One way to do this, he said, "is to not add any more beds when the community doesn't need them. HCA knows they aren't needed and doesn't want to go through the health planning council because they can't justify more beds."

HCA's failure to expand North Florida "is their own fault and they might as well accept that responsibility now," he said.

## Detective is sitter for stolen birds

By MIKE ANDERSON  
Times-Union Staff Writer

Babysitting birds doesn't usually fall within the duties of police detectives, but Buddy Tyrell of the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office has done it.

"Animal Control takes dogs, but they don't take birds," Tyrell, a general detail detective, said Friday. "So I had to ride around with the birds for a couple of hours Thursday trying to decide what to do with them."

Four high school students — two boys and two girls — have been arrested on charges of grand theft of the birds Tyrell babysat.

Tyrell solved the mysterious theft of the rare and expensive Japanese birds, which disappeared from the owner's home at 2646 Leon Road on Nov. 4. The theft wasn't reported to police until Thursday after the owner received a phone call from a friend who said someone tried to sell her the birds.

Brownie Mae Hinkle, a bird breeder, told police that

## Recruit's oath to be special

Army Lt. Col. Roger H.C. Donlon, the first man to be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor in Vietnam, will be here Dec. 5 to enlist the son of a close friend killed in the battle in which Donlon won the nation's highest decoration.

Michael Joseph Alamo, 17, of Hinesville, Ga., son of the late M. Sgt. Gabriel R. "Pop" Alamo, requested the special ceremony after volunteering for the Special Forces Green Berets in which his father served.

Alamo, then 45, and a veteran of World War II and Korea, was posthumously awarded the second highest military decoration, the Distinguished Service Cross, for the battle, about which Donlon later wrote a book, "Outpost of Freedom."

Donlon was a captain and com-

mander of Special Forces Detachment A 726 and Alamo was the team sergeant of the unit, on duty in a mountain valley in northern South Vietnam.

The assignment to Camp Nam Dong was to provide security and improve living conditions for the people of nine villages in the valley.

During a fierce attack on July 4, 1964, by two Viet Cong battalions numbering between 800 and 900 men, Alamo was killed by a mortar shell as he lay already severely wounded. Donlon was blown into the air by the explosion when he went to Alamo's aid.

Donlon, now assigned to the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., suffered multiple wounds as he moved from position to position, evacuating wounded, giving first aid, directing fire and firing at the enemy himself.

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